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(54) **Video game apparatus**

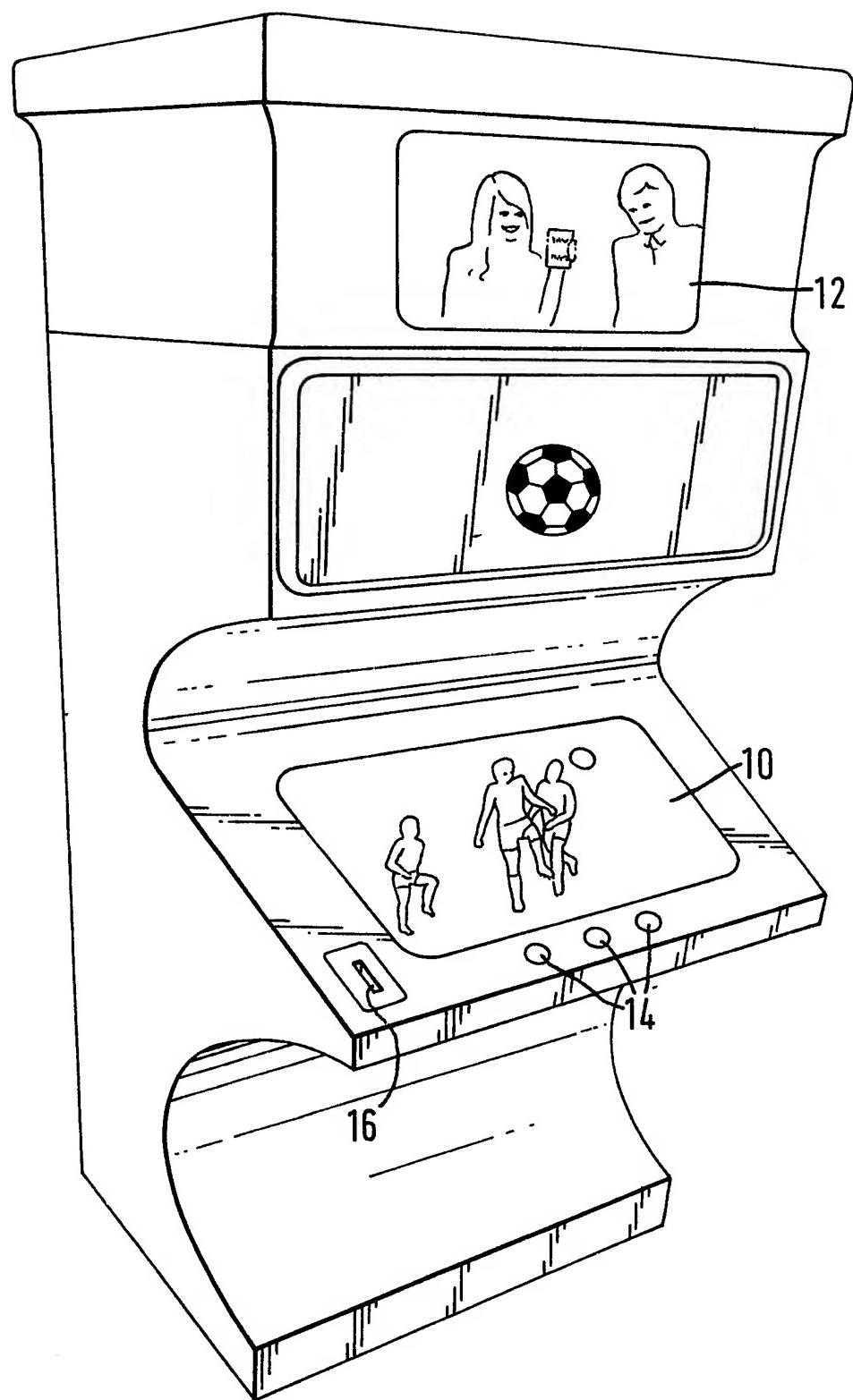
(57) A video game apparatus includes
a video screen for displaying a moving
sequence from a moving ball game
(for example soccer): at the end of

such a sequence, a still picture is
displayed minus the ball. Means are
provided for the player of the game to
indicate a position at which he
believes the ball to be, and means are
provided to indicate if his selection is
correct.

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SPECIFICATION
Video game apparatus

This invention relates to a video game apparatus, particularly of a "spot the ball" nature.

- 5 In accordance with this invention, there is provided a video game apparatus comprising a video display unit for displaying an image (for example of scenes from an association football match) at least an element (e.g. the football) of 10 which moves and wherein display of the moving element is discontinued for at least one period of time, and means operable by a player of the apparatus to select a position on the image during said period of time, and electronic means for 15 determining whether the selected position coincides with the actual position of the moving element at that time.

- In the case where the display is of scenes from an association football (or "Soccer") match and 20 the moving element is the football, then clearly the game is of the usual "spot the ball" nature. However, the display may be of any other moving ball game. The apparatus may then include a first 25 video cassette recorder for playing back on a colour C.R.T. a series of varying sequences preferably from leading football matches, wherein from time-to-time the football itself is temporarily blanked out and the player is then to use his skill and judgement in selecting a position at which 30 he believes the ball is actually positioned. In particular, a playing sequence may be displayed for a short period of time (say 8—10 seconds), and then a still picture appears (minus the ball) for the player to make his "spot the ball" selection.
- 35 In a preferred embodiment, the apparatus is coin controlled and "wins" (i.e. correct selection of the ball position) may be rewarded by a free game. The apparatus may be arranged such that a number of successive wins (say 3) would then 40 terminate the game and award an additional prize, for example a prize voucher or lottery ticket dispensed automatically from the machine.

- 45 Preferably the apparatus includes a second cassette player arranged to display on the same or a second screen continuous interest information (e.g. advertising) during the non-playing intervals. The apparatus may also comprise a digital Alpha/Numeric display running continuously in ticker-tape fashion, for example 50 providing advertising.

- An embodiment of this invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawing, the single figure of which is a schematic perspective view of a video 55 game apparatus in accordance with this invention.

- The apparatus shown is of free-standing nature and has a first video screen 10 for the game and a second video screen 12 for advertising: there are 60 two independent video tape controllers, one for each screen. Preferably a loud speaker is provided for each or both screens. The apparatus preferably comprises a digital memory in which the X and Y co-ordinates of the ball are pre-recorded. Controls

- 65 14 (or instead a joystick controller) are provided for the player to move an illuminating spot over the screen 10, which spot is generated by a spot generator coupled into the C.R.T. itself. Upon actuating one of the controls (or by pressing a button on the head of the joystick) the player indicates that he considers the ball to be at the position of the illuminating spot. Electronic means are provided for deriving digitally the X and Y co-ordinates of this spot (in accordance with the 70 rotary positions of X and Y controls or angular position of the joystick) and comparing these co-ordinates with those stored in the memory for the corresponding instant of time relative to the play back of the video cassette. If the two pairs of co-ordinates match sufficiently, a "win" is clocked on 75 a win counter, each win providing a free game and the 3rd successive win terminating the game and causing a prize voucher or lottery ticket to be dispensed: the apparatus then reverts to 80 operation in the advertising mode.
- The information as to the actual ball position is written into the memory in a setting up process, wherein an electronic pencil is traced over the screen keeping track with the ball, and feeds a 85 microprocessor which generates the necessary positional information for writing into the memory.
- The apparatus control circuit may be arranged to operate according to the following typical 90 sequence. Upon inserting a coin at coin slot 16, the game video cassette plays back and displays a moving sequence from a soccer match for 8—10 seconds. Then the picture goes blank for 2 seconds, and then reappears with a still picture 95 from which the ball is missing. The player of the apparatus is then required to make his ball-position selection whereafter the still picture changes to show the actual ball position for comparison with the selected position (which is 100 still being displayed).

- The edited tape may contain some 50 different game sequences, each with say 10 "stills". The "still" displayed each time is randomly selected from those provided for the moving sequence 105 which has just been shown.

Claims

1. A video game apparatus, comprising a video display unit for displaying an image at least an element of which moves and wherein display of the moving element is discontinued for at least one period of time, means operable by a player of the apparatus to select a position on the image during said period of time, and electronic means for determining whether the selected position coincides with the actual position of the moving element at that time.
2. A video game apparatus as claimed in claim 1, arranged to display a moving sequence for a period of time, whereafter a still picture minus the moving element is displayed for said one period of time.
3. A video game apparatus as claimed in claim 2, arranged for an interval of blank display

between the moving sequence and the still.

4. A video game apparatus as claimed in claim 2 or 3, arranged to randomly select the still picture from a plurality of different still pictures recorded for said moving sequence.
5. A video game apparatus as claimed in any

preceding claim, wherein the image displayed is of scenes from a ball game, the moving element being the ball.

- 10 6. A video game apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the ball game is association football.